

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 307 I was delayed in leaving a meeting with a constituent off the House floor during this two minute votes series and was unable to cast my vote before the vote was closed. Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER THE
NOMINATION OF REBECCA
WODDER**HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER**

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concern regarding the recent nomination of Rebecca Wodder as Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Until recently, Ms. Wodder served as president of American Rivers, an environmental organization that specializes in the removal of dams across the United States. Under the direction of Ms. Wodder, American Rivers removed over 200 dams in 13 states from 1999 to 2010. In total, the organization claims credit for the removal of 150 dams across America. In many cases, the lawsuits that preceded the removal of these dams cost U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars. This clearly demonstrates that Ms. Wodder's agenda hinges on practices that result in the expenditure of vast amounts of federal time and money in exchange for the promotion of an environmental agenda that has shown questionable results.

The Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks oversees and coordinates all policy decisions made by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service. For someone who has spent much of her career battling the very agencies she will control, this is a prime example of the fox guarding the hen house. Indeed, American Rivers touts the fact that they have "secured the planned removal of more than 100 dams on some 55 rivers in the next five years." I doubt very seriously whether Ms. Wodder will conduct an unbiased assessment on the merits of these and other projects during her tenure at the Interior Department.

American Rivers is currently party to seven lawsuits against American taxpayers and the federal government. At a time when Congress is attempting to get our fiscal house in order, we do not need a litigious leader who has brought millions of dollars in lawsuits against our government.

Furthermore, many Americans living along rivers depend on them to support their livelihoods. During this summer alone, flooding has caused insurmountable damage to these communities. If we are going to expend capital on our inland waterways, Congress and the Obama Administration should be focused on maintaining flood control and preserving valuable river infrastructure, not increasing the disparity of funding between fish and wildlife conservation measures and human protection.

The protection of wildlife is a valid concern that should be addressed in a thoughtful manner. However, when efforts to protect wildlife result in irresponsible policy decisions, we must take a stand for the safety of our constituents.

I was proud to join 38 of my colleagues from all corners of this country in sending the following letter to the Senate. In light of not only the country's current financial crisis but also devastating floodwaters that continue to batter our river communities, I urge all of my colleagues in the House and the Senate to carefully consider the nomination of Rebecca Wodder as Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The consequences for millions of Americans could be dire.

Hon. BARBARA BOXER,

Hon. JEFF BINGAMAN,

Hon. JAMES INHOFE,

Hon. LISA MURKOWSKI.

DEAR SENATORS: As you consider President Obama's nomination of Ms. Rebecca Wodder as Assistant Secretary for Fish, Wildlife and Parks at the Department of the Interior, we respectfully write to let you know of our serious concerns with her record as the head of American Rivers, a single-purpose interest group focused on litigating against the federal government and removing economically important infrastructure. We seriously question whether she could adequately represent broader and more balanced interests at the federal level, especially at a fragile economic time with national unemployment exceeding nine percent.

The position for which Ms. Wodder has been nominated oversees the management of at least 180 million federal acres and would have a direct influence on current and potential federal regulations impacting private lands, water rights, energy projects and other infrastructure. This is troubling given her past activities at the Wilderness Society and American Rivers, a non-governmental organization with a long record of receiving American taxpayer dollars while actively litigating against the federal government on multiple fronts. Between 1988 and 2011, American Rivers has either sued or been a party to 150 lawsuits against various parties, mostly the federal government. In fact, American Rivers is currently party to seven lawsuits against American taxpayers and the federal government.

One illuminating piece of litigation revolves around American Rivers' long-standing lawsuit against the federal government's operation of four multi-purpose dams in the Pacific Northwest. These dams, located on the lower Snake River in Washington state, provide multiple benefits including emissions-free, renewable hydroelectricity (enough power to serve a city the size of Seattle), navigation to deliver agricultural products to market, recreation and the good-paying jobs associated with these benefits. Writing in the August 25, 2003 edition of *The Dissident Voice*, Ms. Wodder wrote that "Breaching the four dams on the lower Snake River would be the single most effective way to bring back wild salmon." This is a completely unproven statement and the reality is breaching these dams is an extreme action that would have devastating economic impacts across an entire region while not actually assisting fish recovery. Despite broad agreement, including from the Obama Administration, on a biological opinion for Columbia Basin salmon recovery, Ms. Wodder's organization continues an over decade long lawsuit campaign against the federal government in an effort to demolish these dams.

There are numerous examples of how the policies advocated by Ms. Wodder at Amer-

ican Rivers will have serious impacts throughout the country. First, she effectively advocated for federal regulations that caused up to 40 percent unemployment in parts of the San Joaquin Valley, California by diverting farm water under the guise of protecting the Delta smelt, a three-inch fish. Second, she endorsed last Congress' controversial legislation (H.R. 5088 and S. 787) that many argued could allow the EPA to regulate street and gutter water run-off and man-made ditches. This could cause significant job loss throughout rural America and the National Association of Counties, a non-partisan entity composed of locally elected officials, was concerned that this legislation could lead to "more court cases" and federal groundwater regulation. Third, by naming the Susquehanna River as one of "America's most endangered rivers," her organization attempted to stifle the domestic production of affordable natural gas through hydraulic fracturing.

Furthermore, we are also concerned that this appointment may run afoul of President Obama's own goal of ensuring that political appointees would not work on regulations or contracts directly and substantially related to their prior employer. Ms. Wodder has received significant, long-term compensation during her tenure at American Rivers. As previously noted, the organization currently has numerous pending lawsuits against the very agencies over which she would have regulatory authority and for others that directly or indirectly have been involved in litigation with the Interior Department. This creates a very real and serious conflict of interest.

As Members of the House of Representatives, we appreciate the unique role of the Senate in the confirmation process. Nonetheless, the policies advocated by this nominee would be so detrimental to jobs, our economy and the livelihood of rural Americans that we felt compelled to make our views known and ask that you take them into consideration.

Sincerely,

BLAINE LUETKEMEYER.

DROUGHT IN THE HORN OF
AFRICA**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, the people of the Horn of Africa are facing a devastating crisis. A severe drought has left millions of children, women, and men in Somalia, Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti malnourished. Many are on the verge of starvation. According to the World Food Program, more than 11 million people in the Horn of Africa require food assistance due to the drought.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) reports that below-normal spring rains in the eastern Horn of Africa led to below-normal harvests and shortages of water and grazing resources for livestock. Livestock health has deteriorated markedly, and milk production has declined significantly. Food prices throughout the eastern Horn of Africa continued to rise during the month of June, contributing to food insecurity for the population.

The conditions in Somalia are especially severe. According to the Famine Early Warning

Systems Network (FEWS NET), which is supported by USAID, two areas of southern Somalia are already experiencing famine. Famine exists when at least 20 percent of the population has extremely limited access to basic food requirements, acute malnutrition exceeds 30 percent, and the death rate exceeds 2 out of every 10,000 people per day for the entire population. Death rates are above the famine threshold in two areas and are elevated across the south. Tens of thousands of people have already died in the past three months.

FEWS NET projects that famine will spread across all regions of southern Somalia within one to two months. The network estimates that 3.7 million people are in crisis nationwide, and 3.2 million of them require immediate, life-saving assistance. These severe conditions are expected to remain at least through December of this year. FEWS NET has declared this Africa's worst food security crisis since Somalia's 1991–1992 famine.

The effects of the drought in Somalia have been exacerbated by the lack of an effective central government and continuing conflict with al-Shabaab terrorists.

Drought has also affected Kenya and Ethiopia, where the situation is complicated by the arrival of large numbers of refugees from Somalia, many of them suffering from acute malnutrition.

The U.S. Government has already spent a total of approximately \$458.7 million on humanitarian assistance in the Horn of Africa during fiscal year 2011. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton issued a statement on July 20th expressing concern on behalf of the U.S. Government. She noted that additional international assistance for the region is needed and announced an additional \$28 million in U.S. assistance to Somalia and Somali refugees in Kenya. However, more needs to be done. FEWS NET has called for an immediate, large-scale, and comprehensive response to save tens of thousands of lives.

I am deeply concerned that the State and Foreign Operations appropriations bill for fiscal year 2012, which was marked up yesterday, will not provide sufficient funds for critical priorities like these. The bill includes an 18 percent cut in development assistance, which funds projects such as food security and basic education. The bill also cuts international disaster assistance by 12 percent compared to the fiscal year 2011 level and a shocking 42 percent compared to the fiscal year 2010 level. Such drastically reduced funding levels will not allow the United States to help millions of people in need or respond to emergencies, such as famines, hurricanes and earthquakes.

I have seen children who were starving. It is a terrible sight to see. We cannot sit by idly and allow thousands of children to die and not take any action to help them. To do so would be contrary to our national interests and contrary to our values.

I call upon my colleagues and indeed all Americans to show compassion to our brothers and sisters in Africa. And I call upon the U.S. Government to organize a comprehensive effort to save the lives of millions of hungry people throughout the Horn of Africa.

HONORING THE DISTINGUISHED CAREER OF CRAIG PROSSER

HON. DAVID WU

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mr. WU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Craig Prosser, retiring city manager of Tigard, Oregon. Craig has announced his retirement at the end of July, capping a 35-year career of distinguished service to our community.

Craig began serving Tigard in 1999 as finance director, and since 2005, as city manager. Craig's accomplishments include the formation of the city's first urban renewal district, the Tigard-Lake Oswego Water Partnership, as well as major improvements along Pacific Highway. He also oversaw the opening of the Westside Express Service Commuter line that runs through Tigard. Craig's foresight helped to make Tigard an attractive place to live and do business. Because of his leadership, Tigard was able to retain crucial city services through one of the worst financial crises in our country's history.

Craig has been a consensus builder who has always focused on the needs of the citizens, and he has worked tirelessly to address their concerns. He has approached his work with integrity and a true sense of dedication while empowering staff and those around him. In his retirement announcement Craig said, "I would be willing to put the City of Tigard staff up against any public workforce in the state, if not the nation. The citizens of Tigard are fortunate to have such dedicated elected officials and public employees working on their behalf."

Former Oregon Governor Tom McCall once said, "Heroes are not giant statues framed against a red sky. They are people who say, this is my community, and it is my responsibility to make it better." Craig Prosser truly is an American hero, for he has devoted much of his life to making his community better.

It is my distinct honor to recognize Craig for his outstanding service and for providing a heroic example to us all.

HONORING UNITED STATES MARINE LANCE CORPORAL CODY JAMES ELLIOTT

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 28, 2011

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor 21-year-old United States Marine Lance Corporal Cody James Elliott of Pismo Beach, California. On June 12, 2011, while out on patrol, LCPL Elliott ran to help his Brother in Arms, Josh McDaniels, who had been injured in an IED explosion. While en route to his fallen comrade—without regard for his own safety—LCPL Elliott was severely wounded by another IED explosion. Every day, magnificent men such as Cody shine on the battlefields of honor, bringing their light of heroism and selflessness to the darkness of war—making us all proud to be Americans. In the blast, LCPL Cody lost his left leg, broke his tibia in his right leg, and lost one of his fingers. In just a

few short weeks, he has come a long way in dealing with his wounds and is moving full speed towards recovery. With the help of his family, he continues to recover and show us what it means to bravely serve our country. I ask that this poem penned in his honor by Albert Caswell be placed in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

RUN TO ME

(By Albert Caswell)

Run . . .
Run to me . . .
On battlefields of honor bright . . .
There are but all of those who so carry the fight!
All with their most magnificent light! To win that day, to that night!
Who so shine, all in their most sacrificial light . . .
Who for all of their Brothers In Arms, are but so ready to die!
All in the blood that binds them, this most sacrificial tie!
Which brings such tears to the Angel's eyes!
As it was on the day in June, when Cody you so ran . . . as your heart so swooned!
As your Brother Josh lay dying, as you ran to him . . . not asking why then!
All in your most magnificent shades of green, oh yea you United States Marine!
As when that bomb went off, as you lie there in all its cost . . .
All in what you had given, all in what you had lost!
As the tears rolled down your face, all in what this war had brought!
As up ahead but lie a new front . . .
Only twenty-one years old, and barely hanging on . . .
As it was then there you so saw you had a choice!
As you told yourself, get up Marine . . . while listening to your most inner voice!
As from deep down within, but came such a force!
As now Cody, your new life would so begin . . .
With that first step, all in that pain and heartache which lie so up ahead . . .
As somehow, you lifted up your fine head and so said!
I did not die, I am not dead! As you so chose to feel that wind upon your face . . .
All for your Fallen Brothers, all in your heart they now so hold such a special place!
For you've got a life to live, as now you picked up the pace!
A life to lead, as it's now Cody you've so chosen to move at light speed!
For you are a United States Marine, all in what your recovery has so seen . . .
You see, people like you Cody . . . so give to us all what we so need!
Because, You So Teach Us! And You So Beseech Us!
As so deep down inside, You So Reach Us!
With all of your most courageous faith, You So Speak To Us Out On Our Ways!
For you will run, and you will breathe . . . and oh yea Cody you will so succeed!
And if I ever, I so have a son . . . I pray that he may be as courageous as you my son . . .
Whose heart to me so runs! Because, Cody in heaven you need not arms or legs, and that's where you are going one day . . .
And, you will hear our Lord so say, "Cody, Run To Me!"
All for what you gave, Run To Me!